A MAN IN THE ZOO

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R. Charles Murray
Feb. 1932.


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by

DAVID GARNETT

Illustrated with wood engravings
by R. A. GARNETT



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

I HAVE to thank Mr. Arthur Waley for permission to quote from his translation of a poem by Wang Yen-shou, which appears in "The Temple and other Poems," published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin.

I also wish to say that the Royal Zoological Society has always been the object of my respect and admiration, and that in this story, neither explicitly nor implicitly, is anything intended that could be regarded as derogatory to the Society in any sense.

A MAN IN THE ZOO

JOHN CROMARTIE and Josephine Lackett gave up their green tickets at the turnstile, and entered the Zoological Society's Gardens by the South Gate.

It was a warm day at the end of February, and Sunday morning. In the air there was a smell of spring, mixed with the odours of different animals —yaks, wolves, and musk-oxen, but the two visitors did not notice it. They were lovers, and were having a quarrel.

They came soon to the Wolves and Foxes, and stood still opposite a cage containing an animal very like a dog.

" Other people, other people ! You are always considering the feelings of other people," said Mr. Cromartie. His companion did not answer him, so he went on :

" You say somebody feels this, or that somebody else may feel the other. You never talk to me about anything except what other people are feeling, or may be going to feel. I wish you could forget about other people and talk about yourself, but I suppose you have to talk of other people's feelings because you haven't any of your own."

The beast opposite them was bored. He looked at them for a moment and forgot them at once. He

lived in a small space, and had forgotten the outside world where creatures very like himself raced in circles.

" If that is the reason," said Cromartie, " I do not see why you should not say so. It would be honest if you were to tell me you felt nothing for me. It is not honest to say first that you love me, and then that you are a Christian and love everybody equally."

" Nonsense," said the girl, " you know that is nonsense. It is not Christianity, it is because I love several people very much."

" You do not love several people very much," said Cromartie, interrupting her. " You cannot possibly love people like your aunts. Nobody could. No, you do not really love anybody. You imagine that you do because you have not got the courage to stand alone."

" I know whom I love, and whom I do not," said Josephine. " And if you should drive me to choose between you and everybody else, I should be a fool to give myself to you."

DINGO ♂

Canis familiaris var.

NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

" Poor little Dingo," said Cromartie. " They do shut up creatures here on the thinnest pretexts. He is only the familiar dog."



The Dingo whined, and wagged his tail. He knew that he was being spoken of.

Josephine turned from her lover to the Dingo, and her face softened as she looked at it.

" I suppose they have got to have everything here, every single kind of beast there is, even if it turns out to be nothing but an ordinary dog."

They left the Dingo, walked to the next cage, and stood side by side looking at the creature in it.

" The slender dog," said Josephine, reading the label. She laughed, and the slender dog got up and walked away.

" So that is a wolf," said Cromartie, as they stopped six feet further on. " Another dog in a cage. . . . Give yourself to me, Josephine, that sounds to me as if you were crazy. But it shows anyway that you are not in love with me. If you are in love it is all or nothing. You cannot be in love with several people at once. I know because I am in love with you, and other people are all my enemies, necessarily my enemies."

" What nonsense ! " said Josephine.

" If I am in love with you," Cromartie went on, " and you with me, it means that you are the only person who is not my enemy, and I am the only person who is not yours. A fool to give yourself to me ! Yes, you are a fool if you fancy you are in love when you are not, and I should be a fool to believe it. You do not give yourself to the person with whom you are in love, you are yourself instead of being dressed up in armoured plate."

" Has this place got nothing in it besides tame dogs ? " asked Josephine.

They walked together towards the lion house, and Josephine took John's arm in hers. " Armoured plate. It doesn't seem to me to make sense. I cannot bear to hurt the people I love, and so I am not going to live with you, or do anything that they would mind if they found out."

John said nothing to this, only shrugged his shoulders, screwed up his eyes, and rubbed his nose. In the lion house they walked slowly from cage to cage until they came to a tiger which walked up and down, up and down, up and down, turning his great painted head with intolerable familiarity, and with his whiskers just brushing the brick wall.

" They pay for their beauty, poor beasts," said John, after a pause. " And you know it proves what I've been saying. Mankind want to catch anything beautiful and shut it up, and then come in thousands to watch it die by inches. That's why one hides what one is and lives behind a mask in secret."

" I hate you, John, and all your ideas. I love my fellow creatures—or most of them—and I can't help it if you are a tiger and not a human being. I'm not mad ; I can trust people with every feeling I have got, and I shall never have any feelings that I shouldn't like to share with everybody. I don't mind if I am a Christian—it's better than suffering from persecution mania, and browbeating me because I'm fond of my father and Aunt Eily."

But Miss Lackett did not look very browbeaten

as she said this. On the contrary her eyes sparkled, her colour was high and her looks imperious, and she kept tapping the toe of her pointed shoe on the stone floor. Mr. Cromartie was irritated by this tapping, so he said something in a low voice on purpose so that Josephine should not be able to hear it ; the only word audible was " browbeating."

She asked him very savagely what he had said. John laughed. " What's the use of my talking to you at all if you fly into a rage before you have even heard what I have got to say ? " he asked her.

Josephine turned pale with self-control ; she glared at a placid lion with such fury that, after a moment or two, the beast got up and walked into the den behind his cage.

" Josephine, please be reasonable. Either you are in love with me or else you are not. If you are in love with me it can't cost you much to sacrifice other people to me. Since you won't do that it follows that you are not in love with me, and in that case you only keep me hanging round you because it pleases your vanity. I wish you would choose someone else for that sort of thing. I don't like it, and any of your father's old friends would do better than me."

" How dare you talk to me about my father's old friends ? " said Josephine. They were silent. Presently Cromartie said, " For the last time, Josephine, will you marry me, and be damned to your relations ? "

" No ! You silly savage ! " said Josephine. " No,

you wild beast. Can't you understand that one doesn't treat people like that ? It is simply wasting my breath to talk. I've explained a hundred times I am not going to make father miserable. I am not going to be cut off with a shilling and become *dependent* on you when you haven't enough money to live on yourself, to satisfy your vanity. My *vanity*, do you think having you in love with me pleases my *vanity ?* I might as well have a baboon or a bear. You are Tarzan of the Apes ; you ought to be shut up in the Zoo. The collection here is incomplete without you. You are a survival—atavism at its worst. Don't ask me why I fell in love with you—I did, but I cannot marry Tarzan of the Apes, I'm not romantic enough. I see, too, that you do believe what you have been saying. You do think mankind is your enemy. I can assure you that if mankind thinks of you, it thinks you are the missing link. You ought to be shut up and exhibited here in the Zoo—I've told you once and now I tell you again—with the gorilla on one side and the chimpanzee on the other. Science would gain a lot."

" Well, I will be. I am sure you are quite right. I'll make arrangements to be exhibited," said Cromartie. " I'm very grateful to you for having told me the truth about myself." Then he took off his hat and said " Good-bye," and giving a quick little nod he walked away.

" Miserable baboon," muttered Josephine, and she hurried out through the swing doors.

They were both of them in a rage, but John

Cromartie was in such a desperate rage that he did not know he was angry, he only thought that he was very miserable and unhappy. Josephine, on the other hand, was elated. She would have enjoyed slashing at Cromartie with a whip.

That evening Cromartie could not keep still. When the chairs presumed to stand in his path he knocked them over, but he soon found that merely upsetting furniture was not enough to restore his peace of mind. It was then that Mr. Cromartie made a singular determination—one which you may swear no other man in like circumstances would ever have arrived at.

It was somehow or other to get himself exhibited in the Zoo, as if he were part of the menagerie.

It may be that a strange predilection which he had for keeping his word is enough to account for this. But it will always be found that many impulses are entirely whimsical and not to be accounted for by reason. And this man was both proud and obstinate, so that when he had decided upon a thing in passion he would brave it out so far that he could no longer withdraw from it.

At the time he said to himself that he would do it to humiliate Josephine. If she loved him it would make her suffer, and if she did not love him it would not matter to him where he was.

" And perhaps she is right," he said to himself with a smile. " Perhaps I am the missing link, and the Zoo is the best place for me."

He took his pen and a sheet of paper and sat

down to write a letter, though he knew that if he achieved his object he would be bound to suffer. For some little while he thought over all the agonies of being in a cage and held up to the derision of the gaping populace.

And then he reflected that it was harder for some of the animals than it would be for himself. The tigers were prouder than he was, they loved their liberty more than he did his, they had no amusements or resources, and the climate did not suit them.

In his case there were no such added difficulties. He told himself that he was humble of heart, and that he resigned his liberty of his own free will. Even if books were not allowed him, he could at all events watch the spectators with as much interest as that with which they watched him.

In this manner he encouraged himself, and the thought of how terrible it was for the tigers touched his heart so much that his own fate seemed to him easier to contemplate.

After all, he reflected, he was so unhappy at that moment that nothing could be worse whatever he did. He had lost Josephine, and it would be easier to bear that loss in the discipline of a prison. Strengthened by these considerations, he shook his pen and wrote as follows :—

DEAR SIR,

I write to lay before your Society a proposal which I hope you will recommend to them for their earnest consideration. May I say first that I know

the Society's Gardens well, and much admire them ? The grounds are spacious, and the arrangement of the houses is at the same time practical and convenient. In them there are specimens of practically the whole fauna of the terrestrial globe, only one mammalian of real importance being unrepresented. But the more I have thought over this omission, the more extraordinary has it appeared to me. To leave out man from a collection of the earth's fauna is to play Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. It may seem unimportant at first sight, since the collection is formed for man to look at, and study. I admit that human beings are to be seen frequently enough walking about in the Gardens, but I believe that there are convincing reasons why the Society should have a specimen of the human race on exhibition.

Firstly, it would complete the collection, and, secondly, it would impress upon the mind of the visitor a comparison which he is not always quick to make for himself. If placed in a cage between the Orang-outang and the Chimpanzee, an ordinary member of the human race would arrest the attention of everyone who entered the Large Ape-house. In such a position he would lead to a thousand interesting comparisons being made by visitors for whose education the Gardens do in a large measure exist. Every child would grow up imbued with the outlook of a Darwin, and would become aware not only of his own exact place in the animal kingdom, but also in what he resembled, and in what he

differed from the Apes. I would suggest that such a specimen be shown as far as possible in his natural surroundings as he exists at the present time, that is to say in ordinary costume, and employed in some ordinary pursuit. Thus his cage should be furnished with chairs and a table and with bookcases. A small bedroom and a bathroom at the back would enable him to retire when necessary from the public gaze. The expense to the Society need not be great.

To show my good faith I beg to offer myself for exhibition, subject to certain reservations which will not be found of an unreasonable nature.

The following particulars of my person may be of assistance :—

Race : Scottish.
Height : 5 feet 11 inches.
Weight : 11 stone.
Hair : Dark.
Eyes : Blue.
Nose : Aquiline.
Age : 27 years.

I shall be happy to furnish any further information which the Society may require.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
JOHN CROMARTIE.

When he had gone out and posted this letter Mr. Cromartie felt at peace, and he prepared for the reply with much less anxiety than most young men would have felt in such a situation.

It would be tedious to describe at any length how this letter was received by a deputy in the absence of the secretary, and how it was by him communicated to the working committee on the following Wednesday. It may, however, be of interest to note that Mr. Cromartie's offer would in all probability have been rejected had it not been for Mr. Wollop. He was a gentleman of advanced years who was not popular with his fellow members. Mr. Cromartie's letter, for some reason, threw him into a paroxysm of rage.

This was a deliberate insult, he declared. This was no laughing matter. It was a matter which must and should and should and must, without question, be wiped out by legal proceedings. It would expose the Society to ridicule if they took it lying down. This and much more in the same strain gave the rest of the committee time to turn the thing over in their minds.

One or two first took the opposite view from Mr. Wollop from mere habit; the Chairman observed that the presence of such an interesting correspondent as Mr. Cromartie could not fail to be a great attraction and would increase the gate-money; it was not, however, until Mr. Wollop threatened to resign that the thing was done.

Mr. Wollop withdrew, and a letter was drafted to Cromartie informing him that the committee were inclined to accept his proposal, and asking for a personal interview.

This interview took place the following Saturday,

by which time the committee had become convinced that a specimen of *Homo sapiens* ought certainly to be acquired, though it was not convinced that Mr. Cromartie was the right man, and Mr. Wollop had retired to Wollop Bottom, his rustic seat.

The personal interview was entirely satisfactory to both sides, and Mr. Cromartie's reservations were accepted without demur. These dealt with food and drink, clothing, medical attention, and one or two luxuries which he was to receive. Thus he was to be allowed to order his own meals, see his own tailor, be visited by his own doctor, dentist, and legal advisers. He was to be allowed to administer his own income, which amounted to about £300 a year, neither was objection to be raised to his having a library in his cage, and writing materials.

The Zoological Society on their side stipulated that he should not contribute to the daily or weekly press ; that he should not entertain visitors while the Gardens were open to the public ; and that he should be subject to the usual discipline, as though he were one of the ordinary creatures.

A few days served to prepare the cage for his reception. It was in the Ape-house, behind which a larger room was furnished for his bedroom, with a bath and lavatory fixed behind a wooden partition. He was admitted on the following Sunday afternoon, and introduced to his keeper Collins, who also looked after the Orang-outang, the Gibbon, and the Chimpanzee.

Collins shook hands and said that he would do

all he could to make him comfortable, but it was obvious that he was embarrassed, and strangely enough this embarrassment did not diminish as time went on. His relations with Cromartie always remained formal, and were characterised by the most absolute politeness, which, needless to say, Cromartie scrupulously returned.

The cage had been thoroughly cleansed and disinfected, a plain carpet had been laid down, and it was furnished with a table where Cromartie had his meals, an upright chair, an armchair, and at the back of the cage a bookcase. Nothing but the wire-netting front and sides separating him from the Chimpanzee on one side, and the Orang-outang on the other, distinguished it from a gentleman's study. Greater magnificence characterised the furniture of his bedroom, where he found that he had been provided with every possible comfort. A French bed, a wardrobe, a cheval glass, a dressing-table with mirrors in gilt and satinwood, combined to make him feel at home.

John Cromartie employed Sunday evening in unpacking his belongings, including his books, as he wished to appear an established institution by the time visitors arrived on the Monday. For this purpose he was given an oil lamp, as the electric wiring had not been completed for the cage.

When he had been busy for a short time he looked about and found something very strange in his situation. In the dimly-lit cage on his right the Chimpanzee moved uneasily; on the other side

he could not see the Orang-outang, which must have been hiding in some corner. Outside, the passage was in darkness. He was locked in. At intervals he could hear the cries of different beasts, though he could rarely tell which it was from the cry. Several times he made out the howl of a wolf, and once the roar of a lion. Later the screaming and howling of wild animals became louder and almost incessant.

Long after he had arranged all his books in the shelves and had gone to bed, he lay awake listening to the strange noises. The clamour died away, but he lay waiting for the occasional laugh of the hyæna or the roar of the hippopotamus.

In the morning he was woken early by Collins, who came to ask him what he would have for breakfast and during the day, and added that workmen had come to fix a board at the front of his cage. Cromartie asked if he might see it, and Collins brought it in.

On it was written :—

Homo sapiens

MAN ♂

This specimen, born in Scotland, was presented to the Society by John Cromartie, Esq. Visitors are requested not to irritate the Man by personal remarks.

When Cromartie had had breakfast there was

very little to do ; he made his bed and began reading " The Golden Bough."

Nobody came into the Ape-house until twelve o'clock, when two little girls came in ; they looked into his cage, and the younger of them said to her sister :

" What monkey's that ? Where is it ? "

" I don't know," said the elder girl. Then she said : " I believe the man is there to be looked at."

" Why he's just like Uncle Bernard," said the little girl.

They looked at Cromartie with an offended stare, and then went on at once to the Orang-outang, who was an old friend. The grown-up people who came in during the afternoon read the notice in a puzzled way, sometimes aloud, and more than once after a hurried glance they went out of the house. They were all embarrassed except a jaunty little man who came in just before closing time. He laughed, and laughed again, and finally he had to sit down on a seat, where he sat choking for three or four minutes, after which he took off his hat to Cromartie and went out of the house saying aloud : " Splendid ! Wonderful ! Bravo ! "

The next day there were rather more people, but not a great crowd. One or two men came and took photographs, but Mr. Cromartie had already learnt a trick that was to serve him well in his new situation—that of not looking through the bars, so that often he would not know whether there were people watching him or not. Everything was made

very comfortable for him, and on that score he was glad enough that he had come.

Yet he could not help asking himself what did his surroundings matter to him? He was in love with Josephine, and now he had parted from her for ever. Would the pain he felt on that account ever die away? And if it did, as he supposed it would, how long would it take to do so?

In the evening he was let out, and walked round the Gardens alone. He tried to make friends with one or two of the creatures, but they would not take notice of him. The evening was cool and fresh, and he was glad to be out of the stuffy Ape-house. He felt it very strange to be alone in the Zoo at that hour, and strange to have to go back to his cage. The next day, just after breakfast, a crowd began pushing into the house, which was soon packed full. The crowd was noisy, some persons in it calling out to him very persistently.

It was easy enough for Cromartie to ignore them, and never let his eyes wander through the wire-netting, but he could not prevent himself from knowing that they were there. By eleven o'clock his keeper had to fetch four policemen, two standing at each door to keep the crowd back. The people were made to stand in a queue, and to keep moving all the time.

This went on all day, and in fact there were thousands waiting to see "The Man" who had to be turned away before they could get a sight of him. Collins said it was worse than any bank-holiday.



Cromartie did not betray any uneasiness; he ate his lunch, smoked a cigar, and played several games of Patience, but by tea-time he was exhausted, and would have liked to go and lie down in his bedroom, but it seemed to him that to do so would be to confess weakness. What made it worse, because more ridiculous, was that the Chimpanzee and the Orang-outang next door, each came to the partition walls and spent the whole day staring at him too. No doubt they were only imitating the public in doing so, but they added a great deal to poor Mr. Cromartie's unhappiness. At last the long day was over, the crowds departed, the Gardens were closed, and then came another surprise—for his two neighbours did not go away. No, they clung to the wire partitions and began to chatter and show their teeth at him. Cromartie was too tired to stay in the cage, and went and lay down in his bedroom. When he came back after an hour the Chimpanzee and the Orang were still there, and

greeted him with angry snarls. There was no doubt about it—they were threatening him.

Cromartie did not understand why this should be until Collins, who had come past, explained it to him.

" They are wild with jealousy," he said, " that you should have drawn such a large crowd." And he warned Mr. Cromartie to be very careful not to go within reach of their fingers. They would tear his hair out and kill him if they could get at him.

At first Mr. Cromartie found this very hard to credit, but afterwards, when he got to know the characters of his fellow captives better, it became the most ordinary commonplace. He learnt that all the monkeys, the elephants, and the bears felt jealous in this way. It was natural enough that the creatures that were fed by the public should feel resentment if they were passed over, for they are all insatiably greedy, and the worse they digest the food given them the more anxious they are to glut themselves with it. The wolves felt a different jealousy, for they were constantly forming attachments to particular persons among the crowd, and if the chosen person neglected them for a neighbour they became jealous. Only the larger cats, lions, and panthers seemed free from this degrading passion.

During his stay Mr. Cromartie gradually came to know all the beasts in the Gardens pretty well, since he was allowed out every evening after closing-time, and very often was allowed to go into other cages. Nothing struck him more forcibly

than the distinction which most of the different creatures very soon drew between him and the keepers. When a keeper came past every animal would pay some attention, whereas few of them would even look round for Mr. Cromartie. He was treated by the vast majority with indifference. As time went on he saw that they treated him as they treated each other, and it struck him that they had somehow learnt that he was being exhibited as they were themselves. This impression was so forcible that Mr. Cromartie believed it without question, though it is not easy to prove that it was so, and still more difficult to explain how such a piece of knowledge could have spread among so heterogeneous a collection of creatures. Yet the attitude of the animals to each other was so marked, that Mr. Cromartie not only observed it in them, but very soon came to feel it in himself for them. He could not describe it better than by calling it firstly "cynical indifference," and then adding that it was perfectly good-natured. It was expressed usually by total indifference, but sometimes by something between a yawn of contempt and a grin of cynical appreciation. It was just in these slight shades of manner that Mr. Cromartie found the animals interesting. Naturally they had nothing to say to him, and in such artificial surroundings their natural habits were difficult to ascertain, only those living in families or colonies ever seeming perfectly at their ease, but they all did seem to reveal something of themselves in their attitude to each other.

To man they showed quite different behaviour, but in their eyes Mr. Cromartie was not a man. He might smell like one, but they saw at once that he had come out of a cage.

There is in this a possible explanation of the often recorded fact that it is particularly easy for convicts to make friends with mice and rats in prison.

For the rest of that week crowds collected round the new Ape-house every day, and the queue for admittance was longer than that at the pit of Drury Lane Theatre on a first night.

Thousands of people paid for admission to the Gardens and waited patiently for hours in order to catch a glimpse of the new creature which the Society had acquired, and none were really disappointed when they had seen him, although many professed to be so. For everyone went away with what people are most grateful for having—that is, a new subject for conversation, something that everyone could discuss and have an opinion about, viz., the propriety of exhibiting a man. Not that this discussion was confined to those who had actually been successful in catching a glimpse of him. On the contrary it raged in every train, in every drawing-room, and in the columns of every newspaper in England. Jokes on the subject were made at public dinners, and at music-halls, and Mr. Cromartie was referred to continually in *Punch*, sometimes in a facetious manner. Sermons were preached about him, and a Labour member in the House of Commons said that when the working

classes came into power the rich would be put " alongside the Man in the Zoo, where they properly belonged."

What was the strangest thing was that everyone held the view either that a man ought to be exhibited, or that he ought not to be exhibited, and that after a week's time there were not half a dozen men in England who believed no moral principle to be involved in the matter.

Mr. Cromartie cared less than nothing for all these discussions of which he was the subject; it was no more to him indeed what men said about him than if he had been the ape in the cage beside his own. Indeed it was really less, for had the ape been able to understand that thousands of people were talking about it, the creature would have been as much puffed up with pride as now it was mortified with jealousy that its neighbour should draw so vast a crowd.

Mr. Cromartie told himself he cared nothing for the world of men now. As he looked through the meshes of his cage at the excited faces watching him, it cost him an effort to listen to what was being said of him, and after a while his attention wandered even against his will, for he cared nothing for mankind and cared nothing for what they said.

Yet while he told himself that with some complacency, something came into his mind which threw him into such disorder that he looked about him for a minute as if he were distracted, and then ran as if in terror into his hiding-place, his place of

refuge, his bedroom, which he had not sheltered in before, at least not in that way.

" What if I should see Josephine among them ? " he asked himself aloud, and the thought of her coming was so actual to him that it seemed as if she were at that moment entering the house, and then were there at the bars already.

" What can I do ? " he asked himself. " I can do nothing. What can I say ? I can say nothing. No, I must not speak to her, I will not look at her. When I see her I will sit down in my armchair and look on the floor until she is gone, that is, if I have the strength. What will become of me if she should come ? And perhaps she will come every day and will be always there watching me through the bars, and will call out and insult me as some do already. How could I bear that ? "

Then he asked himself why should she come at all, and began to persuade himself that there was no reason why she should visit him, and that it was the most irrational fear that could seize hold of him—but it would not do.

" No," said he at length, shaking his head, " I see she is bound to come. She is free to go where she likes, and one day when I look up I shall see her there, staring into my cage at me. Sooner or later it is bound to happen." Then he asked himself what errand would send her there to look at him ? Why would she come ? Would it be to mock at him and torment him, or would it be because now that it was too late she repented of sending him there ?

"No," he told himself, "no, Josephine will never repent, or if she should, she would not own to it. When she does come here it will be to hurt me more than she has done already; she will come to torture me because it amuses her and I am at her mercy. Oh, God, she has no mercy in her."

At this Mr. Cromartie who was so proud only a half-hour ago, saying he cared nothing for mankind now and nothing for what they said, began to cry and whimper like a baby, staying hidden all the while in his little bedroom. He sat there on the edge of his bed with his face buried in his hands for a quarter of an hour, and the tears running through his fingers. And all the while he was busy with this new fear of his, and saying to himself first that his life was no longer safe, that Josephine would bring a pistol and shoot him through the bars; and then his thoughts fetching about, that she cared nothing for him, and would not come to hurt him, but from mere love of notoriety and to get herself talked about by her friends or in the newspapers. At last he pulled himself somewhat together, washed his face and bathed his eyes, and then went back into his cage, where you may be sure the crowd was pretty impatient to see him after being kept waiting so long.

Once again you could see how this Mr. Cromartie "cared nothing for mankind and what they said." For the moment that he stepped into his cage in full view of the public, from being an abject creature with his face comically twisted up to keep back

his tears, he became at once quite calm and self-possessed and showed no trace of any feeling. Yet did this assumed calm show that he cared nothing for mankind ? Was it because he cared nothing for mankind that he made these efforts, swallowing down the lump that was risen in his throat, holding back the tear that would have started to his eye, and strolling in with a serene smile, then knitting his brows with an affectation of thought ; and was all this because he cared nothing for mankind ?

The strange thing was that Mr. Cromartie should have taken three weeks to think that Josephine would certainly come and pay him a visit. For three weeks he had been thinking at every moment of the day of this girl Josephine, and, indeed, dreaming of her almost every night, but it had never come into his head that he would ever see her again. He had told himself a thousand times, " We are parted for ever," and had never asked himself, " Why do I say this ? " He had, one evening, even retraced their steps as they had wandered from one cage to another on the day that they had had their final rupture. But now all these sentimental ideas were a thousand miles away from him, who, though he lay back, yawned, and negligently cut the pages of a book from Mudie's, was all the same terrified at the question he kept asking himself :

" When will she come ? Will she come now, to-day, or perhaps to-morrow ? Will she not come till next week, or not for a month ? "

And his heart shrank within him as he understood

that he would never know when she was coming and he would never be prepared for her.

But with all this flutter Mr. Cromartie was like a countryman coming into town a day late for the fair, for Josephine had already paid him a visit that day two hours before he had ever thought that she might do so.

When she had come Josephine did not know at all certainly why she found herself there. Every day since she had heard of the " loathsome thing " John had done she had vowed that she would never see him again, and would never think of him again. Every day she spent in thinking of him, and every day her anger drove her to walk in the direction of Regent's Park, and all her time was occupied in thinking how she could best punish him for what he had done.

At first it had been insupportable for her. She had heard the news from her father at breakfast while he was reading *The Times*, and had learnt it in fragments as he chanced to read it out to her while she sat silent with the coffee machine and the egg machine in front of her, for her father stickled for his eggs being boiled very exactly. When breakfast was over she found *The Times* and read the account of the " Startling Acquisition by the Zoo Authorities." She told herself then that she could never forgive or forget the insult to which she had been subjected, and that while she sat at breakfast she had grown an old woman.

As time went on Josephine's fury did not slacken ;

no, it became greater; and it passed through a dozen or more phases every day. Thus at one moment she would laugh with pity for such a poor fool as John, in the next marvel that such a creature should have the sense to know where he belonged, then turn all her rage on the Zoological Society for causing such an outrage to decency to occur in their grounds, and reflect bitterly on the folly of mankind who were ready to divert themselves at such a sorry spectacle as the degraded John—reducing themselves indeed to his level. Again, she would exclaim at the vanity which led him to such a course; anything would do so long as he got himself talked about. No doubt he would see that she, Josephine, was talked about too. Indeed, John, she declared, had done it solely to affront her. But he had gone the wrong way to work if he thought he would impress her. She would indeed go to see him and show him how little she cared for him; no, what was better, she would go visit the other ape next door to him. That was the way by which she could best show him her indifference to him, and her superiority to the vulgar mob of sightseers. Nothing would induce her to look at such a base creature as John. She could not regard his action with indifference. It was a calculated insult, but fortunately he would alone suffer for it, for as for herself she had never cared in the least for him, and her complete indifference was not likely to be ruffled by his latest escapade. Indeed it meant no more to her than any other creature being exhibited.

Thus Miss Lackett drove round and round in circles, vowing vengeance at one time and the next moment swearing that it was all one to her what he did, she had never cared for him and never would. But do what she might she could think of nothing else. At night she lay awake saying to herself first one thing and then another, and changing her mind ten times for every time she turned her head on the pillow, and thus she spent the first three or four days and nights in misery.

Yet in all this there was something that wounded Miss Lackett more even than the fact itself, and that was the consciousness of her own worthlessness and vulgarity. Everything she felt, everything she said, was vulgar. Her preoccupation with Mr. Cromartie was vulgar, and every emotion connected with him which she now felt was degrading. In fact, after the first few days this weighed on her so heavily that she was almost ready to forgive him, but she could never forgive herself. All her self-respect was gone for ever, she told herself; hence-forward she knew that she was never disinterested. She had offended herself more than any number of Cromarties would ever do. She was, she said, deeply disappointed in herself, and wondered how it had come about that this side of her nature should have been so long unsuspected by her.

It was this turning off of her rage and indignation against herself that finally allowed of her going to see him, or rather of her going to see the Chimpanzee next him, for she repeated to herself that she would

not look at him, that she could not endure to see him, and so on, though at moments this decision was modified by the reflection that she only hoped he would feel properly punished when he saw her give him one glance of cool contempt.

Miss Lackett found the event different from her expectations. In front of the Ape-house a crowd was collected, and directly she had joined it she found herself caught up in a queue of people waiting to see " The Man." On all sides she heard jokes about him, and those of the women (who were in the majority) struck her as being barely decent. Progress was extremely slow and very exhausting.

At last, when she found herself in the building itself, it was impossible for her to carry out her intention of looking only at the apes, for she suddenly became overcome at the thought of seeing them and closed her eyes lest she should see an ape and be overcome by nausea. In a few minutes she found herself in front of Cromartie's cage, and gazed at him helplessly. At that moment he was engaged in walking up and down (which occupation, by the way, took up far more of his time than he ever suspected). But she could not speak to him, indeed she dreaded that he should see her.

Back and forth he walked by the wire division, with his hands behind his back and his head bent slightly, until he reached the corner, when up went his head and he turned on his heel. His face was expressionless.

Before she got out Miss Lackett was to have

another shock, for, leaving Mr. Cromartie's cage, she let her eyes wander and suddenly was looking straight into the mug of the Orang. This creature sat disconsolately on the floor with her long red hair matted and entangled with straws. Her close-set brown eyes were staring in front of her and nothing about her moved but her black nostrils, that were the shape of an inverted heart and set in a mask of black and dusty rubber. This, then, was the creature that her lover resembled! It was to this melancholy Caliban that everyone compared him! Such a hideous monster as this ape was thought a suitable companion for the man with whom she had imagined herself in love! For the man whom she had considered marrying!

Miss Lackett slipped silently out of the house, sick with disgust and weighed down with shame. She was ashamed of everything, of her own feelings, of her weakness in caring what happened to John. She was ashamed of the spectators, of herself, and of the dirty world where such men, and beasts like them, existed. Mixed with her shame was fear which grew greater with every step she took. She was alarmed lest she would be recognised, and looked at everyone she passed with nervous apprehension; even after she had got out of the Gardens she did not feel safe, so that she got herself a taxi and climbed in almost breathlessly, and even then looked behind her through the pane of glass in the back. Nothing followed her.

"Thank God, it is all right. There is no danger,"

she said to herself, though what the danger was of which she spoke she could not have said. Perhaps she was afraid that she might be shut up in a cage herself.

The next day Miss Lackett had somewhat shaken off the painful impressions caused by her visit, and her chief emotion was a sensible relief that it had turned out no worse.

" Never again," she said to herself, " shall I be guilty of such folly. Never again," she repeated, " need I run such an awful risk. Never again shall I think of that poor fellow, for I shall never need to. Out of justice to him I had to see him, even though at a distance, and without his seeing me. It would have been cowardly not to have gone, it would not have been in keeping with my character. But it would be cowardice in me to go again. It would be weak. After all I had to indulge my curiosity, it would have been fatal to have suppressed it. Now I know the worst and the affair is closed for ever. If I were to go again it would be painful to me and unjust to him, for I might be recognised ; if he heard that I had been twice it would fill him with false hopes. He might conclude that I wished to speak with him. Nothing, nothing could be farther from the truth. I think he is mad. I feel sure he is mad. Talking to him would be like those interviews that people have to have once a year with their insane relatives. But fortunately for me my duty coincides with my inclinations—I ought not to see him and I abhor the thought of doing so. There is no more to be said."

It was not often that Miss Lackett was so consistent in her thoughts, neither, we may add, was she often quite so prim. She managed to repeat such phrases over and over again to herself throughout the week, but somehow she did not succeed in forgetting all about Mr. Cromartie, or even in putting him out of her thoughts for more than an hour or two at a time.

On the fourth day after her visit it so happened that General Lackett gave a dinner-party at which his daughter acted as hostess. Several of the guests were young, and one or two of them not very well to do. It was natural in these circumstances, as the General had rather thoughtlessly dismissed his chauffeur for the evening, that his daughter should offer to drive some of her young friends home. One of them lived in Frognal, two others in Circus Road, St. John's Wood. On the outward journey Miss Lackett took the ordinary route from Eaton Square, that is, by Park Lane, Baker Street, Lord's, and the Finchley Road as far as Frognal, afterwards bringing her other companions back to Circus Road.

It was then, after saying good-bye, and good-bye again as she drove away, that she gave way to a feeling of unrest. She drove slowly to Baker Street station, but by that time she was thinking of Mr. Cromartie. This caused her, almost mechanically, to swing her car round to the left, and shortly afterwards to take the Outer Circle. As she drove, her mind was almost blank; she was driving in that

direction merely to dissipate a mood. All she was conscious of was that Cromartie was there—in the Zoo. She was tired, and driving distracted her. In a few moments she was passing the Gardens. She pulled up just over the tunnel, before reaching the main entrance. At this point she was as close as she could get to the new Ape-house, which lay, as she knew, under the shadow of the Mappin Terraces. She got out of the car and walked up to the palings. They were too high for her to look over, and when she pulled herself up by her hands there was nothing to be seen but the black shadows of evergreens and, through one break in them, a corner of the Mappin Terraces—a silhouette of black against the moonlight. As she looked it came into her head that it was like something familiar to her. Her wrists ached and she jumped down.

"John, John, why are you in there?" she said aloud. In a few moments she saw a policeman approaching her, so she got back into her car and drove on slowly.

As she passed the main entrance she turned again, and again she saw the Mappin Terraces.

"The Tower of Babel, of course," she said aloud, "in Chambers's Encyclopedia. It's like Noah's Ark, too, I suppose, as it's a menagerie, and —Oh, curse! Oh, damn!" There were tears in her eyes, and the street lamps had become little circular rainbows. But what she said to herself was that it was awkward driving.

That night she could not sleep, and could find none of the ordinary defences against unhappiness. That is to say, she was unable to affect any kind of superiority to her troubles, besides which she saw them exactly as they were, in their naked horror, and was not able to put them in conventional categories. For could Miss Lackett have said to herself: "I have been in love with John, now I find he is mad. This is a terrible tragedy, it is very painful to think of people being mad, for me it is a disappointment in love. Such disappointments are the most painful to which a girl in my position can be exposed," and so on—if she could have done this then Miss Lackett would have found a sure way to reduce her suffering to a minimum. For by putting forward such general ideas as madness and disappointment in love she could very soon have come to feel only the general emotion suited to these ideas. But as it was she could only think of John Cromartie, his face, voice, manners, and way of moving; of the particular cage in which she had last seen him, the smell of apes, the swarm of people staring at him and laughing, and of her own loneliness and misery which John had deliberately caused. That is to say she thought only of her pain, and did not cast about to give it a name. And naming a sorrow is a first step to forgetting it. About three o'clock in the morning she got out of bed and went down to the dining room, where she found a decanter of port, another of whiskey, and some Bath Olivers. She poured

herself out a glass of port and tasted it, but its sweetness disgusted her, so she put it down and helped herself to the whiskey. After she had got down half a wineglass of the spirit, taking it neat as it came from the bottle, she felt much calmer. She drank another glass of it and then went up to her room, threw herself on her bed, and at once fell into a heavy, drunken sleep.

During these days Mr. Cromartie had by no means got rid of his apprehensions of seeing Josephine. The thought which tormented him most was that he was at her mercy, that is to say, that she was at liberty to visit him whenever she liked, and to stay away as long as she chose. The material conditions of his life did not change in any degree, though there was no longer a vast crowd anxious to see him at all times ; and from four policemen, two were soon thought to be enough to regulate his visitors. After another week the two were reduced to one, but though the crowd was scantier each day this policeman was left permanently, more as a protection for Mr. Cromartie than anything else, for certain persons had shown themselves very disobliging to him. Indeed, Mr. Cromartie had had to complain on two occasions, and that not only of abusive language. But during this time very little had changed in his material surroundings ; this is not saying there was no alteration in Mr. Cromartie's state of mind. In that respect there were two forces at work. One was that he was now continually thinking of Josephine and expecting a

visit from her, and, that as his circle of ideas grew smaller in solitude, he became more and more taken up by imagining how she would come, what she would say, and so forth. Thus he was continually rehearsing scenes with Josephine, and this habit interfered with his daily reading and at times even alarmed him about his sanity. In the second place, perhaps because thinking so much of Josephine made him withdraw into himself, he became shy, was annoyed by the spectators, and felt something approaching a repulsion for the animals in the menagerie.

This feeling was naturally intensified in regard to his immediate neighbours, the female Orang and the Chimpanzee. In their case he was indeed only making a slight return for the ill will they bore him, which seemed to increase with every day. Mr. Cromartie was really much to blame for an aggravation of their natural and, one may say, reasonable dislike of him. For not only did he draw a larger crowd than fell to their share, but he persistently ignored them, and so neglected ordinary civilities that he would have made himself exceedingly unpopular had his neighbours been human beings like himself. This was due to a singular defect of imagination in him rather than to natural want of manners, for in ordinary life he always showed himself perfectly well bred. If an excuse can be found for his conduct it is that he believed that the proper thing for him to do was to ignore the very existence of his neighbours, and also that Collins,

his keeper, never set him right on this point. The fact is that Collins was never perfectly easy with Mr. Cromartie, and that he was the kind of man to take offence himself. Indeed, he was more jealous of the feelings of his old favourites, the two apes, than he was quite aware of. Besides this he had lost the Gibbon, which had been given to another keeper when Mr. Cromartie had come, and there is no hiding the fact that Collins would have liked to have the Gibbon back in Mr. Cromartie's place. For one thing the ape had given him less work, and for another, it had never been at any time in its life his social superior. Besides that, Collins had, for we should do him justice, a very positive affection for the animal. One evening, after a day passed in a most desultory way, Mr. Cromartie was sitting in his cage sucking his pipe, when suddenly he saw Miss Lackett come into the empty house.

This was the evening of the day after her troubled night. In the morning she had resolved to settle the question whether Cromartie were mad or not, to make a judgment on the subject that would be impartial and definitive, for she felt convinced that if she could not settle the question of his sanity one way or the other, there would be no doubt of her losing hers.

But when she had got into the Gardens she found it impossible to see Mr. Cromartie alone. A crowd, though not as large as formerly, was still clustered round the Ape-house the whole of the morning.

Between one and two there were always some persons before his cage whose presence rendered it impossible for her to speak with him. She saw then that the only thing was for her to wait till last thing at night and to hurry in just at closing time. All this delay upset the arrangements of her day. The knowledge that she had promised to call for her old schoolfellow, Lady Rebecca Joel, and to go on and take tea at Admiral Goshawk's, and to go out afterwards with them, worried her excessively. At the last minute she sent messages pleading headache and indisposition, and then found nothing to do until closing time at the Zoo. To stay in the Gardens for so long was intolerable. To add to her discomfort the sky clouded over and a sharp storm came on, the air soon being filled with sleet, snowflakes and hailstones. She ran out of the Gardens, getting wet as she did so, and it was some moments before she could find a taxi. When once inside there was the absolute necessity of telling the man where to take her.

" Baker Street," said she. For Baker Street is a central point from which she could easily go wherever she wished. This was the reason, it will be remembered, that made the great detective Holmes choose to have his rooms in Baker Street, and to-day it is still more central. All Metro-Land is at one's feet.

But the time taken between the Zoo and Baker Street Tube station is short, and Miss Lackett arrived with no clearer idea of where to go or what to do than she had when she first ran out of the

Gardens. To be sure the rain had stopped for the time being, and she walked briskly along the Marylebone Road. For she belonged to the order of society which cannot loiter in the street. She marched away without any purpose, wondering what she would do with herself, when on came the storm again with a sudden gush of rain. Josephine looked about her and found a refuge offered by the gates of a large red-brick building, which she entered. It was Madame Tussaud's.

She had never as a child visited the celebrated collection of wax-work effigies, and she was at once interested in what she saw there. Some internal voice bade her make the most of this casual opportunity, to throw aside her temporary unhappiness, and enjoy herself.

She fell into a peaceful state of mind, and for several hours in succession gave herself up to the pleasure of gazing at the formal figures of the most celebrated persons of this and former ages. For the most part they were the great Victorians and dated from last century. There were but few other visitors, but the great saloons are always crowded, and everywhere that she looked she found familiar faces.

Josephine had been presented at Court, but had not been impressed by the experience. Madame Tussaud's seemed to her like a more august presentation at an Eternal Levee.

At one end of the room there were indeed the royal families of Europe in their coronation robes.

There was an air of formality, a stiffness, and a constraint in all present which seemed to her natural in guests waiting for their host to come in. And perhaps in another moment a curtain would be brushed aside, and the Host of Hosts would appear.

Josephine did not wait any longer, but ran downstairs to the Chamber of Horrors.

Before it seemed possible it was time to go back to the Gardens, if she were to see Cromartie before closing time. She walked quickly into the house, and found Cromartie sitting near the front of his cage as if he were expecting to see her. As she came up to the cage he put down the pipe he had been holding in his mouth and stood up, seeming then to overshadow her, the floor of his cage being higher than the corridor in which she stood.

" Please sit down," she said, and then was silent, finding nothing of all the things she had come to tell him ready to her tongue.

He obeyed her.

They looked then at each other for some little while in silence. At last Josephine summoned up her resolution and said to him, speaking in a low voice :

" I think that you are mad."

Cromartie nodded his head ; he had huddled himself up in his chair and apparently was unable to speak.

Josephine waited and said : " I was very worried about you, because I thought at first that something

I had said to you might have made you behave in this idiotic way, but it is now quite clear to me that even if what I said did have any influence, you are quite mad, and that I need not think about you any more."

Cromartie nodded his head again. She noticed with some surprise that he was weeping, and that his face was wet with tears which were falling on to the floor of his cage. The sight of his tears and his determined silence made her harden her heart. She felt suddenly angry.

The bell began ringing for closing time, and she heard someone, probably the policeman, with his hand on the door talking to another man outside. Josephine turned away, but a moment afterwards came back to the cage. Cromartie was walking away from her blowing his nose.

" You must be mad," she called after him ; then the door opened and the policeman came in.

" Hurry up, Miss, or you'll have to stay here all night, and you know that would never do," she heard him say as she hurried away.

Though Josephine's visit had been painful, it did not succeed in distressing Cromartie for very long. Indeed, after a short time he recovered himself completely, and reasoning upon what she had said, and the reasons of her coming at all, he found much with which to comfort himself. In the first place, all the secret doubts he had had in the last week of his own sanity were now dissipated. He was not going to believe that he was mad, he said

to himself, simply because Josephine Lackett told him so. Besides which, he felt sure that she only affirmed that he was mad because it suited her to believe it. If he were actually insane it would relieve her of any necessity of thinking of him, and that she had felt any such necessity to exist was in itself extremely gratifying. Furthermore, he felt certain that if Josephine had really been convinced of his insanity she would not have paid him a visit in order to tell him of it. Even Josephine would not find any satisfaction in such useless inhumanity. If she felt bound to take any steps in the matter she would have gone to the officers of the Society and insisted that he should be examined by a mental doctor, and if necessary certified as a lunatic. And with these very satisfactory reasons Mr. Cromartie assured himself that he was not really mad, or even in any danger of becoming so, though he did not doubt that Josephine would readily persuade herself to the contrary.

Happiness and misery are purely relative, and Mr. Cromartie was now raised into a state of the highest spirits by considerations which would not ordinarily produce such a result. But after the condition of complete despair in which he had been plunged for several weeks, he could hardly imagine any greater bliss than knowing that Josephine was having to persuade herself that he was mad in order to be able to dismiss him from her thoughts.

But it must not be concluded from this that Mr. Cromartie indulged in any sort of hope. He did

not even consider the possibility of escaping from the Zoo or of winning Josephine's love, because he had never had any ambition to do either. Such thoughts would have seemed to him not only ridiculous but also dishonourable. He had taken his course with his eyes open, and the question whether he should abide by it or not was not even open to consideration. In this respect the Zoological Society were indeed fortunate in their selection of a man. For though there is little doubt that Mr. Cromartie would have been given his liberty whenever he asked for it, without his having recourse to extreme measures such as refusing food or imploring the aid of visitors in rescuing him, yet letting him go would have been a cause of vexation to the Society. It is not to be supposed that there would have been any difficulty in replacing him by another specimen of his species. No, the reason why they would have felt his loss such a severe blow is because the public readily attaches itself to the individual animals in the Zoo, and is not to be consoled when such a favourite dies, or disappears, even if it is instantly replaced by an even finer specimen of the same species. Many persons habitually resort to the Gardens in order to visit their particular friends, Sam, Sadie and Rollo, and not merely to look at any polar bear, orang, or king penguin. And this applies quite as forcibly to the Fellows of the Society as to the outside public. It was natural, therefore, that they should entertain hopes that the new acquisition to

the Gardens should remain in it for the rest of his natural life, and though he could not vie with the other creatures in general popularity when once the vulgar curiosity about him had worn off, yet it was to be hoped that in time he would develop as much personality as if he were a bear or an ape.

While Sir James Agate-Agar was being shown over the house by the curator, he referred to Cromartie as "your local Diogenes." The name was immediately on the lips of everyone who moved in Zoological circles. There was opportunity here for Mr. Cromartie had he been disposed to take it. When once the vulgar publicity which had attended his installation had passed, there were many persons in the upper ranks of London society who were anxious to make Mr. Cromartie's acquaintance, and had he known enough to take up the part marked out for him, there is no doubt but that he could have had as much society as he cared for, and that of persons of the very front rank, all of whom were animated by the most genuine interest in him and friendliness towards him, though naturally not without the expectation that they would in exchange be entertained by his remarks, for such a man as the Diogenes of the Zoo must surely be a great oddity.

But though Mr. Cromartie had every intention of remaining for the rest of his life in the cage provided for him, he had no idea of the social opportunities which doing so would afford him, and he

appreciated them so little that he most steadily repulsed all overtures of the kind, and betrayed an obvious reluctance to enter into conversation with anyone, even the curator himself. At the time in question, however, this was set down to a not unnatural self-consciousness in the new situation in which he found himself, and also to the disturbing effect of being exhibited daily to a large crowd, among whom there were persons whose offensive behaviour excited the greatest indignation.

It was several days after this first interview before he was to see Miss Lackett again. During this period he had much to think of, but his spirits remained high ; for the first time for ten days he took a walk round the Gardens from pleasure, and not from a feeling that he must have some fresh air if he were to keep well. For several evenings he sat motionless for half an hour or more near the beavers' and the otters' pools, and was frequently rewarded by a glimpse of the former, though only on one occasion by the latter. Whatever creatures in the Gardens had most retained their native wildness were sure to attract him. They seemed to him, in his rather warped state of mind, to have preserved their self-respect. It was to accomplish this in his own particular case which was his chief concern, though of course he was perfectly well aware that it did not consist in behaving with any shyness. On the contrary, Mr. Cromartie's self-respect depended upon his maintaining an appearance of unruffled calm, together with the utmost

civility in all his relations with those with whom he had any business.

One evening as he was watching for the foxes, the keeper of the small cats' house came up to him and entered into conversation. After a few trivial remarks which served their ordinary purpose—that is they let Mr. Cromartie know that the keeper was a pleasant fellow and well-disposed to him—he said :

" I think it would be a good plan if you were to make a pet of one of the animals, that is, if you would like to. It seems a waste for you to be here and not make one of the out-of-way kind of pets."

Mr. Cromartie had been thinking that day that perhaps the greatest disadvantage under which he lay in his situation, was that he could not have any familiar friend. His former life had been utterly renounced and was now closed to him, so that it was no use his looking backwards for one. At the same time he was so utterly cut off from the ordinary run of humanity that he would not care to risk having any intercourse with his fellows lest he should be exposed to pity, or to an offensive curiosity.

The suggestion of this keeper could not have come at a better time, for he saw that though he might not care for a *pet* he might make a *friend*. In any case, he reflected, equality of circumstances is an excellent basis for any acquaintanceship, and he could nowhere share the circumstances of an animal's life so well as he could here in the Zoo.

Had he gone into a tropical jungle it would have been no closer, for there, though the animals would have been at home, he would not.

He followed the keeper into the small cat house, and talked with him for a little while longer.

It so happened that one of the beasts directly under the care of this man had attracted Mr. Cromartie when he went into the house before. For in the Caracal he saw an unhappiness to match his own, combined with beauty. The Caracal, poor creature, never stopped moving, holding its face to the bars of its little cage. It moved back and forth with tireless rapidity, and a monotony which seemed inspired by unutterable sorrow.

At his request the keeper now took out the Caracal for him to speak to it.

For several days after this Mr. Cromartie never failed to pay the Caracal a visit every evening, and while making very few overtures to it, he showed the creature that he was more disposed to be friendly than most of its fellow captives. This persistence was not thrown away, for after five or six days the Caracal would stop his sad motions before his bars when Cromartie came in, and would look after him with evident regret when the time came for him to go away.

The keeper, on his side, was mightily pleased at his Caracal's getting such a companion, and perhaps the more so as it was not his own favourite; in particular the man gave himself all the credit for advising Mr. Cromartie to make a pet of some

beast or other. It was not long before he spread the news of it, telling the curator and others of the staff who might be interested.

The upshot of all this was that one evening as Cromartie was sitting reading, locked in for the night, suddenly he heard the door unlocked and beheld the curator come to pay him a visit.

" Oh, I just stepped in, Mr. Cromartie," said the curator in the most friendly way, " for a word or two. The keeper of the small cats' house tells me that you have made quite a pet of the Caracal."

At these words Cromartie turned a little pale, and said to himself : " The fat is in the fire now. He is going to forbid us continuing our friendship ; I ought to have expected it."

The next words the curator said quite undeceived him, for he went on : " Now how would you like, Mr. Cromartie, to have that fellow in your—in with you here, I mean ? You need not have him unless you like, of course, and you need not keep him a day longer than you want to. I am not trying to save space, I assure you."

Mr. Cromartie accepted the suggestion thankfully, and it was agreed that the Caracal should come and pay him a trial visit for a few days.

The next evening he went as usual to the small cat house, but this time when the Caracal was let out he invited him to come back with him, and with very little demur the creature followed him and then walked with him by his side, and then, his confidence increasing, the cat ran before him a few



yards, stopping every now and then as if to ask him :

" Which way shall we go now, comrade ? "

Then as Cromartie came up with him he shook the tassels of his tufted ears and again ran on before. You may be sure that the poor Caracal did not suffer from nostalgia for his little cage. No, indeed, he ran into his friend's more commodious quarters as if he would be content to stay in them for ever, and after he had trotted all round them four or five times and leapt up on to the table and down off each of the chairs, he settled down as if he were at home, and perhaps indeed he was so for the first time since he was come to the Gardens.

This pretty kind of cat, for such he found the Caracal to be (not but what it had some virtues for which cats are not usually famous), proved a very great solace to him in his captivity. For the creature had a thousand playful tricks and pretty ways which were a delight to him. For so long he

had not been able to see anything all day except his neighbours the sordid apes, and the staring faces of a crowd which seemed to share all the qualities of those apes (and with less excuse for being there), that it was a rare kind of happiness for him to have a graceful and charming creature beside him. Moreover it was his companion, the friend of his choice, and the sharer of his misfortunes. They were equals in everything, and there was in their love none of that fawning servility on the one side and domineering ownership on the other that makes nearly all the dealings of men and animals so degrading to each of the parties. Though it may seem fanciful, there was actually a strong resemblance in the characters of these two friends.

Both were in their nature gay and sportive, with pleasant manners which admirably concealed the untamed wildness of their tawny hearts. But the resemblance lay chiefly in their excessive and stubborn pride. In both of them pride was the mainspring of all their actions, though necessarily the quality must show itself very differently in a man and in a rare and precious kind of a cat. In imprisonment, though in one case it was voluntarily made, and in the other case forced, neither would fawn or make utter and complete submission.

For though Mr. Cromartie always showed a complete resignation and exemplary obedience, yet it was only a feigned submission after all.

The visit of his new friend was to the liking of both parties, and in general they found none of the

difficulties that sometimes attend living at close quarters. It is true that the Caracal was no sleeper at night, but spent all the early part of it prowling hither and thither; still it was on very silent and padded feet, and by morning he would be tired of roaming, so that on waking up Mr. Cromartie never failed to find his friend curled up on the bed beside him.

In all their relations the man never attempted to exercise any authority over the beast; if the Caracal wandered away he did not call him back, nor did he try to tempt him with any tit-bits from his table, nor by rewards of any sort train him to new tricks. Indeed, to look at them both together it would seem as if they were unaware of each other's presence, or that nothing but a total indifference existed between them. Only if the Caracal trespassed too far on his patience, either by eating his food before he had finished, or by playing with his pen if he were writing, would he swear at him or give him a little cuff to show his displeasure. Once or twice on such occasions the Caracal bared his teeth at him and stretched out his sharp and wicked claws, but yet he always thought again before using them on his big, slowly moving friend. Once or twice, of course, as might have been expected, Mr. Cromartie got scratched, but this was done in play or was merely accidental; indeed, it almost always was when the Caracal, leaping up from the ground upon his shoulder, held on lest he should over-balance. Only once was this at all

serious, and then because the Caracal, trying a higher jump than usual, landed on his head and the nape of his neck. Mr. Cromartie cried out in surprise and pain, and the Caracal drew in his claws instantly, and by purring and many affectionate rubbings of his body against his friend, sought to make amends for his misdeed. Mr. Cromartie was bleeding from ten dagger wounds on his scalp, but after the first moment he spoke gently to the cat and forgave him fully. All this was, however, nothing when weighed against the happiness he had in having a companion to be with him in his captivity, and a companion who was so much the happier for having him.

At Cromartie's request the Caracal was now installed permanently with him, and another board was attached to the front of the cage, beside his own. It bore the inscription :

CARACAL
Felis Caracal. ♂ Iraq.
Presented by Squadron N, R.A.F., Basra.

There were no pictures attached of either Man or Caracal, as it was taken for granted that visitors would be able to distinguish them. The public showed a great appreciation of the Man's sharing his cage with an animal, and Mr. Cromartie suddenly became, what he had not been before, extremely popular. The tide turned, and everybody

found charming the person who had so scandalised them. Instead of ill-natured remarks, or even insults, Mr. Cromartie's ears were assailed with cries of delight.

This change was certainly one for the better, though Mr. Cromartie reflected that in time it might become as tedious as ill-natured remarks had been formerly. His defence was the same against each, that is, he shut his ears, never looked through the netting if he could help it, and read his books as if he were indeed a scholar working in his own study.

He was sitting in this way reading " Wilhelm Meister," with his companion the Caracal at his feet, when he suddenly heard his name called and looked up.

There was Josephine, standing before him, looking in at him, her face pale, her mouth rigid, and her eyes staring.

Up jumped Mr. Cromartie, but as he was surprised his self-control was gone for an instant.

" My God ! What have you come for ? " he asked her in agitated tones.

Josephine was taken aback for a moment by this greeting, and as he strode to the front of his cage, stepped back away from him. For the moment she was confused. Then she said :

" I have come to ask you about a book. The second volume of ' Les Liaisons Dangereuses.' Aunt Eiley is fussing about it. She says the plates make it a very valuable edition. She suspects me of reading it too, and thinks it unsuitable. . . ."

As she spoke Cromartie began laughing, screwing up his eyes and showing his teeth.

" So my forgetfulness has got you into a scrape, has it ? " he asked. Then : " I'm most awfully sorry. I've actually got it here. I'll post it to you to-night. I can't slip it through the wire netting, unfortunately. That's one of the drawbacks of living in a cage."

Josephine had not seen Cromartie looking so charming for a long time. Her own expression changed also, but she still remained shy and awkward, and was obviously afraid of someone coming into the Ape-house and finding them together, talking.

For a moment or two they were silent. She looked at the Caracal and said :

" I read in the paper about your having a companion. I expect it is a very good plan. You are looking better. I've been having bronchitis, and have been laid up for a fortnight since you saw me last."

But as Josephine spoke Cromartie's face clouded over again. He noticed her awkwardness and was annoyed by it. He remembered also her last visit, and how she had behaved then. Recollecting all this he frowned, drew himself up, rubbed his nose rather crossly, and said :

" You must realise, Josephine, that seeing you is excessively painful to me. In fact I am not sure I can endure being exposed to the danger of it any longer. Last time you came to see me for the purpose

of informing me that you think I am mad. I don't think you are right, but if I cannot guard myself from seeing you I daresay I shall go mad. I must therefore ask you in the interests of my own health, if for nothing else, never to come near me again. If you have anything to say of an urgent nature—if there should be another book of yours, or any reason of that sort, you can always write to me. Nothing you can say or do can be anything but extremely painful and exhausting, even if you felt kindly disposed towards me; but from your behaviour I can only conclude you want to give me pain and come here to amuse yourself by hurting me. I warn you I am not going to submit to being tortured."

"I've never heard such nonsense, John. I hoped you were better, but now I am sure you really are mad," said Josephine. "I've never been spoken to in such a way. And you imagine that I of all people want to see you!"

"Well, I forbid your coming to see me in the future," said Mr. Cromartie.

"Forbid! You forbid!" cried Josephine, who was now furious with him. "You forbid me to come! Don't you realise that you are being exhibited? I, or anyone else who pays a shilling, can come and stare at you all day. Your feelings need not worry us; you should have thought of that before. You wanted to make an exhibition of yourself, now you must take the consequences. Forbid me to come and look at you! Good heavens!

The impertinence of the animal! You are one of the apes now, didn't you know that? You put yourself on a level with a monkey and you are a monkey, and I for one am going to treat you like a monkey."

This was said in a cold, sneering sort of way that was altogether too much for Mr. Cromartie. The blood flew to his head, and with a face distorted with almost insane rage he shook his fist at her through the bars. When at last he was able to speak it was only to tell her in an unnatural voice :

" I shall kill you for that. Confound these bars ! "

" They have some advantages," said Josephine coolly. She was frightened, but as she spoke Mr. Cromartie lay down on the floor of his cage and she saw him stuff his handkerchief into his mouth and bite it ; there were tears in his eyes, and sometimes he fetched a deep groan as if he were near his end.

All this frightened Josephine more even than his threatening that he would murder her. And seeing him rolling there as if he were in a fit made her repent of what she had said to him, and then she came right up to the netting of his cage and began to beg him to forgive her, and to forget what she had said.

" I did not mean one word of it, dearest John," said she in a new and altered voice, which scarce reached to him, it was so soft. " How can you think I want to hurt you when I come to this wretched prison of yours to see you because I love you, and

cannot forget you in spite of all that you have done only on purpose to hurt me ? "

" Oh, go away, go away, if you have any pity left in you," said John. His own voice was now come back to him, but he sobbed once or twice between his words.

Meanwhile the Caracal, who had watched all this scene and listened to it with a great deal of wonder, now came up to him and began to comfort him in his distress, first sniffing at his face and hands and then licking them.

And before anything more could be said between Josephine and John, the door opened and a whole party of people were come in to see the apes. At that Josephine went out of the house and out of the Gardens, and getting into a cab went straight home, all as if she were in a nightmare. As for Mr. Cromartie, he struggled quickly on to his feet and hurried out of his cage into his hiding-place to wash his face, comb his hair, and compose himself a little before facing the public ; but when he went back the party were gone away and there was only his Caracal staring at him and asking him as plain as words :

" What is the matter, my dear friend ? Are you all right now ? Is it over ? I am sorry for you, although I am a Caracal and you are a man. Indeed, I do love you very tenderly."

There was only the Caracal when he went back into his cage, only the Caracal and " Wilhelm Meister " lying on the floor.

That night Miss Lackett suffered every torment which love can give, for her pride seemed to have deserted her now when she most wanted it to support her, and without it her pity for poor Mr. Cromartie and her shame at her own words were free to reduce and humble her utterly.

" How can I ever speak to him again ? " she asked herself. " How can I ever hope to be forgiven when I have gone twice to him in his miserable captivity, and each time I have insulted him and said the things which it would hurt him most to hear ? "

" From the very beginning," she told herself, " it has all been my fault. It is I who made him go into the Zoo. I called him mad, and mocked at him and made him suffer, when everything has been due to my ungovernable temper, my pride and my heartlessness. But all the time I have suffered, and now it is too late to do anything. He will never forgive me now. He will never bear to see me again and I must suffer always. If I had behaved differently perhaps I could have saved him and myself too. Now I have killed his love for me, and because of my folly he must suffer imprisonment and loneliness for ever, and I myself shall live miserably and never again dare hold up my head."

Providence has not framed mankind for emotions such as these ; they may be felt acutely, but in a healthy and high-spirited girl they are not of a very lasting nature.

It was only natural, then, that after giving up the greater part of the night to the bitterest self-reproach

and to the completest humiliation of spirit, and after shedding enough tears to make her pillow uncomfortably damp, Miss Lackett should wake next morning in a very hopeful state of mind. She determined to visit Mr. Cromartie that afternoon, and despatched a note acquainting him with her intention in these terms :

Eaton Square.

DEAR JOHN,

You know well that the reason why I behaved badly is because I still love you. I am very much ashamed, please forgive me if you can. I must see you to-day. May I come in the afternoon ? It is very important, because I don't think we can either of us continue like this much longer. I will come in the afternoon. Please consent to see me, but I will not come unless you send me word by the messenger that I may.

Yours,

JOSEPHINE LACKETT.

The moment that Josephine had sent off the messenger she regretted what she had said in it, and nothing seemed to her then more certain than that her letter would exasperate Cromartie still further. The next moment she thought to herself : " I have exposed myself to the greatest humiliation a woman can receive." For a second or two this filled her with terror, and at that moment she would have readily killed herself. As neither poisons, poignards, pistols or precipices were within reach

she did nothing, and in less than a minute the mood passed, and she said to herself :

" What does my humiliation matter ? I suffered more of that last night than I can ever suffer again. Last night I humiliated myself in my own eyes. If John tries to humiliate me to-day he will find the work done. Meanwhile I must be self-controlled. I have no time to waste on my emotions ; I have many things to do. I must see John, and as I am in love with him I have got to make terms with him. I have got to make a bargain with him."

Acting on these thoughts she went out at once, meaning to walk to the Zoo without waiting any longer for the messenger boy to come back. But her mind was still busy.

" I will completely forgive him, and offer to become engaged to him secretly in return for his instantly leaving the Zoo."

She did not reflect as she said this that nothing would be easier for her than to break off such an engagement, whereas if Cromartie once left the Gardens it was improbable that they would take him back.

But when she got to the Marble Arch she had to wait a little before crossing the road, and she noticed a man selling newspapers beside her. On the placard he carried she saw :

MAN IN THE ZOO
MAULED BY
MONKEY

For the first moment she did not connect the placard with her lover ; she permitted herself to be amused at the thought of a spectator having his finger bitten, but in the next instant a doubt arose and she hurriedly bought the paper.

" This morning the ' Man in the Zoo,' whose real name is Mr. John Cromartie, was shockingly mauled by Daphne, the Orang in the next cage to his." Josephine read the account of the affair right through very slowly.

It appeared that about eleven o'clock that morning Cromartie had been playing ball in his cage with the Caracal. In dodging the Caracal he had fallen heavily against the wire mesh partition separating him from the Orang. While he had rested there for a moment the spectators were horrified to see him seized by the Orang, which caught him by the hair. Mr. Cromartie had put up his hands to prevent his face being scratched, and the Orang had managed to get hold of his fingers and had cracked the bones of them. Mr. Cromartie had shown great courage and had succeeded in freeing himself before the arrival of the keeper. Two fingers were crushed and the bones fractured ; he had sustained several severe scalp wounds and a scratched face. The only danger to be feared was blood poisoning, as the injuries inflicted by apes are well known to be peculiarly venomous.

On reading this Josephine suddenly remembered how the King of Greece had died from the effects of a monkey bite, and she became more and more

alarmed. She called a taxi, got into it, and told the driver to take her to the Zoological Gardens as fast as he could. All the way there she was in a fever of agitation, and could settle nothing in her own mind.

Having arrived at the Zoo, she went straight to the house of the resident curator, and was just in time to see Mr. Cromartie being carried in on a stretcher, but before she could come up to it the door was shut in her face. She rang, but it was almost five minutes before the door was opened by a maidservant who took her card in, with the request that she might see the curator as she was a friend of Mr. Cromartie's. Before the maid came back, however, the curator came out, and Josephine explained her visit without any embarrassment. She was invited in, and found herself in a fine well-lit dining-room in the presence of two gentlemen in morning dress, and both with bushy eyebrows. The curator introduced her as a friend of Mr. Cromartie's, and they both gave her a very keen look and bowed.

Sir Walter Tintzel, the elder of the two, was a short man with a rather round red face; Mr. Ogilvie, a taller, youngish man, with a skin like parchment, and a glass eye into which she found herself staring. "How is the patient?" asked Josephine, falling at once into that state of mind which is produced by the presence of distinguished medical men, and particularly surgeons, a state of mind, that is, of almost complete blankness, when however upset one may have been the moment before, one finds

all emotion suspended, or swallowed up in fog. All the faculties at such a moment are concentrated on behaving with an absurd decorum.

" It is a little too early to say, Miss Lackett," replied Sir Walter Tintzel, who was filled with curiosity to find out more about her.

" My friend Mr. Ogilvie has just amputated a finger ; in my opinion it would have been running an unjustifiable risk not to have done so. There were several minor injuries, but happily they did not require such drastic measures. May I ask, Miss Lackett, without impertinence, if you have known Mr. Cromartie long ? You are, I understand, a personal friend, a close and dear friend of Mr. Cromartie's."

Miss Lackett opened her eyes rather wide at this remark, and replied :

" I was naturally anxious. . . . Yes, I am an old friend of Mr. Cromartie's—and, if you like, a close friend." She laughed. " Is there danger of blood-poisoning ? "

" There is a risk of it, but we have taken every precaution."

" The King of Greece died of being bitten by a monkey," cried Josephine suddenly.

" That's rubbish," interrupted the curator, coming forward. " Why everybody in the Gardens has been more or less seriously bitten by monkeys at some time or other. It is always happening. It's dreadful to think that the poor fellow should have lost a finger, but there's no danger."

"You are sure there's no danger?" asked Josephine.

The curator appealed to the medical men. They allowed themselves to smile.

Josephine withdrew, and in the hall the curator said to her:

"Don't worry about him, Miss Lackett; it's a beastly thing of course to think of, but it's not serious. He isn't the King of Greece; the monkey isn't that sort of monkey even. He'll be up and about in a day or two at the most. By the way, is your father General Lackett?"

Josephine was surprised, but admitted it without hesitation.

"Oh, yes—he's an old friend of mine. Drop in one day next week to tea and see how our friend is going on."

Josephine left in very much better spirits than she had come, and though she once or twice was troubled by the recollection of Mr. Cromartie's unconscious form, the head swathed in bandages, and the body covered with a blanket, she felt small anxiety. On the contrary, she very soon gave herself up to rosy visions of the future.

Thus nothing appeared to her to be more clear than that Mr. Cromartie would leave the Zoo, and the loss of a finger was perhaps not too high a price to pay for restoring him to ordinary ways, or perhaps she might say not too great a punishment for conduct such as his had been.

And it crossed her mind also that now there was

no need for her to humble herself to Cromartie, for he would leave the Zoo and become reconciled to her now as a matter of course. It was for her to forgive him! She had had a narrow escape. What a weak position she might have been in had she seen him before the ape bit him! How strong a position she now occupied! She must, she reflected, take this lesson to heart and never act hurriedly on the impulse of the moment, otherwise she would give John every advantage and there would be no dealing with him at all. Next she recollected the letter she had sent him, and spent a little while trying to recall the exact terms of it. When she remembered that she had said that she was ashamed and had asked to be forgiven, she bit her lips with vexation, but the next moment she stopped short and said aloud: "How unworthy this is of you! How petty! How vulgar!"

And she remembered at that moment all the vulgar and horrible things she had felt when she had first learnt that John had gone to the Zoo, and how much ashamed she was of them afterwards, and how hatefully she had behaved on both of her visits to him. She told herself then that she ought to be ashamed, ought to ask forgiveness, and that she ought to be thankful that she had done so in her letter, but in the next instant she was saying to herself: "All the same, it won't do to put myself at his mercy. I must keep the upper hand or my life won't be worth living." And after that her mind raced off again to visions of the future in

which John was rewarded with her hand and they took a country house. Her father was an authority on fishponds and trout streams. He and Cromartie would of course lay out a fishpond. Perhaps there would be a moat round the house. But the figure who bent over her father's shoulder at breakfast, pushing away the egg-boiling machine to look at a plan of the new trout hatchery, that figure was a very different person from Mr. Cromartie the mutilated, monkey-bitten man in the Zoo.

When Josephine got home she found a note which had been left for her, but which was not in Mr. Cromartie's handwriting.

It ran as follows :

Infirmary, Zoo.

DEAR JOSEPHINE,

Your note has come by the messenger. I shall not be free to see you this afternoon, which relieves me from making the decision not to do so. You say that the reason you behave cruelly to me is because you love me. It is because I know that, that I have tried to do without your love. I think you are a character who will always torture the people you love. I cannot bear pain well; that alone makes us unsuited to each other. It is the principal reason why I never wish to see you again.

You are mistaken when you say that you have something of the first importance to tell me. Unless it is something to do with the arrangements which the Zoo authorities make with regard to the Ape-house, it cannot be of importance to me.

Please believe that I bear you no resentment for the past ; indeed I still love you, but I mean what I say.

Yours ever,

JOHN CROMARTIE.

When Josephine had read this letter over twice and had realised that it must have been written *after* he had been bitten by the ape, and just before his finger was cut off, she gave up her hopes.

Everything she had been feeling was revealed as ridiculous folly. If John could write like that at the moment when he must have been most wishing to escape from confinement, she saw that her plans for his regeneration were impossible. She went up to her room and lay down. All was lost.

That morning Mr. Cromartie had taken his breakfast of rolls, butter, Oxford marmalade, and coffee as usual. When it had been cleared away he began to play ball with the Caracal.

For this purpose he used an ordinary tennis ball, and throwing it on the floor of his cage, made it bounce on to the netting and back to him. The game therefore resembled fives, the object, however, being, on his part, to prevent the Caracal intercepting the ball, which, by the way, he was rarely able to do more than three or four times running, for the cat was very quick on its legs and had a good eye.

After they had been playing for about ten minutes Mr. Cromartie slipped backwards in taking a ball



which bounced high, and fell heavily against the wire netting wall of his cage. Before he could get his balance he felt himself taken hold of by the hair, and understood at once that it was his neighbour the Orang who had got him in its clutches. The brute then got a finger as far as Mr. Cromartie's ear and slit it through, though not injuring the drum. Mr. Cromartie managed to turn his head then in order to see his assailant, and found his face was now exposed, and his forehead was scratched. To protect himself he put one hand in front of his face, and was pushing himself away from the netting with the other when the Orang caught hold of two of his fingers in its teeth. The pain of this made him jerk his head free, and the lock of hair by which the Orang held him came right out of his scalp.

The ape still held on to his fingers like a bulldog. Just then his Caracal, which had been dodging about between his legs, got one paw through the netting and raked the Orang's thighs with his claws, but the ape did not leave go even then. Mr. Cromartie, who had a very cool head for a man in such a situation, took out a couple of wax vestas from his pocket, struck them on his heel, and thrust the flaring fusees through the wire into the ape's muzzle and in that way made him leave go his hold at once.

This circumstance of his feeling for the fusees in his pocket while the ape was slowly grinding his fingers to a mere pulp very greatly impressed the

spectators, who beyond shouting for assistance were powerless to do anything. No less remarkable was the way in which, directly he was free, he pulled away the Caracal from the netting before the ape could catch hold of him, and this though the cat was beside itself with the fury of the fight. But strangely enough in doing this he did not get scratched, either because he pulled him off by the scruff with his uninjured hand and carried him right out of the cage, or because the Caracal knew him even at that moment.

Collins arrived just as this happened and the shock was almost too much for him; it was remarked that he was deathly white and could scarcely speak. Mr. Cromartie was covered with blood, blood pouring from his ear and his fingers, and all his hair matted with blood, but he came back at once after locking up his Caracal, to show the spectators that he was not badly hurt; they for their part clapped their hands with joy, either because they were glad to see him escape, or because they were grateful for having been presented with such an unusual spectacle for nothing.

Cromartie then went back to his inner room and Collins led him off at once to the infirmary, where he was given first aid. It was some little while after this that he received Josephine's letter and dictated an answer for the messenger to take to her. There was some little delay in the messenger getting to him.

Directly he had despatched the letter he was

anæsthetised and the third finger of his right hand amputated.

After the operation and before he had regained consciousness, he was taken to the house of the curator, who had decided that he would be more comfortable there than anywhere else. Although at the time Mr. Cromartie had behaved with perfect composure and had borne his injuries without flinching, not only at the time of the assault, but for over three hours afterwards, and had been able to compose a letter during that time as if nothing had happened, he had received a great nervous shock the effects of which only became apparent next day. He spent a very disturbed night, but in the morning was much better ; ate an ordinary breakfast but did not get up, and Sir Walter Tintzel, who visited him about eleven o'clock, was sanguine and predicted a rapid recovery. In the afternoon he was restless and suffered acutely, and as evening came on his temperature rose rapidly. That night he was in a condition of fitful delirium, occasionally falling asleep and waking up with nightmares which persisted even when he appeared to be wide awake.

On the second day the fever increased and blood-poisoning in an acute form was recognised, but the patient was altogether rational in his mind. On the third day the symptoms of blood-poisoning were more pronounced. The patient fell into a delirium which lasted without intermission for the following three days. Most of the feverish hallucinations which filled his mind then passed completely away

when he recovered consciousness. Yet Mr. Cromartie had a clear and vivid memory of one of them. This was, he knew, nothing but a dream, yet it seemed but to have just happened to him, and the dream or vision was singular enough for it to be put down here.

In the Strand people were hurrying along in little crowds like gusts of dirty smoke that was blown at intervals in wisps across the road. They were all coming towards him as he walked down from Somerset House towards Trafalgar Square. No one was walking the same way that he was, and none of the people he met brushed against him or even looked at him, but they melted away to right and left and so let him pass by. Sometimes when a band of them passed him he caught a whiff of their odour, and the smell sickened him.

They were frightened, they hurried by, but he was thinking of that great man Sir Christopher Wren, who had planned the street he was then walking in. But nobody cared, nobody had built it, though the plans were all there rolled up and ready, and just as good to-day as they were in the reign of King Charles II.

He lifted up his head presently, and up in the sky a white streak was being deliberately drawn. It was an aeroplane writing advertisements. So he stood still in the middle of the hurrying crowds to watch it ; now he could just see the tiny aeroplane like a little brown insect. Slowly in the sky a long straight line was drawn and then a loop—surely it must be

the figure 6. And then the aeroplane stopped throwing out smoke and became almost invisible as it went off tittering across the sky.

The numeral swelled and grew and was being slowly blown away when all of a sudden another white streak appeared and the aeroplane was drawing something else. But as he watched he was aware that after all it was the same thing again, another 6, and when it had done that the aeroplane mounted again into the sky and drew another 6, but already its first work was undone by the wind and in a few moments there was nothing to be seen in the sky but a few wisps of smoke.

For a second or two Cromartie felt himself rocking in the aeroplane, which went humming away across the sky before falling again sideways like a snipe bleating ; that was only a moment, as when you shut your eyes and fancy that you can feel the earth spinning in space, and then Cromartie was walking out of the Strand into Trafalgar Square. It was empty, and he looked at the Nelson monument with wonder. Landseer's great beasts planted their feet flat down before them. What were they, he wondered ? Lions or Leopards, or perhaps Bears ? He could not say. And suddenly he saw that his right hand was bleeding and his fingers gone. A great crowd had entered the Square ; the fountains were playing, the sun was shining, and he got on to a scarlet omnibus. But very soon he saw that the people were whispering together on the omnibus and they were all looking at him, and he

knew that it was because they saw his wounded hand. He put his other hand up to his forehead and there was blood on that also. He was afraid then of the people on the bus and so he got out. But wherever he wandered the people stopped and stared at him and whispered, and as he walked among them they drew aside and formed into little groups and gazed after him as he went by, and it was because they knew him by the wounds on his head and on his hand.

They were all of them muttering and looking at him with hatred, but something restrained them, so that though their eyes were like sharp daggers they were one and all afraid to point their fingers. . . .

He was going to vote. He would cast his vote. Nothing should stop him. At last he saw the two entrances to the underground voting hall with Ladies written over one and Gentlemen written over the other, and he went downstairs. But when he asked the attendant for his voting card the man took down a large book bound in lambskin with the wool left on, and turned over several pages and looked down them. At last he said: "But your name is not written in the Book of Life, Mr. Cromartie. You must give up your secret, you know, if you wish to be registered." When he heard this Mr. Cromartie felt sick, and he noticed the smell that came from all the other voters in their ballot boxes; he hesitated, and at last he said:

"But if I do not give up my secret may I not vote?"

" No, Mr. Cromartie. Nobody can vote who does not give up his secret, that is called the secrecy of the ballot—but it is out of the question for you to vote, anyhow . . . you bear the Mark of the Beast."

And Mr. Cromartie looked at his hand and felt his forehead and saw that he did indeed bear the Mark of the Beast where it had bitten him, and he knew that he was an outcast. That was what everybody had whispered. He would not give up his secret so he was rejected by mankind and hated by them, for he frightened them. They were all alike, they had no secrets, but he had kept his and now the Beast had set its Mark upon him, and he seemed terrible to them all, and he himself was afraid. " The Beast has set his Mark on me," he said to himself. " It will slowly eat me up. I cannot escape now, and one thing is as bad as another. On the whole I would rather the Beast slowly ate me up than give up so much, and the stench of my fellows disgusts me."

And then he heard the Beast moving restlessly behind some partition ; he heard the rustling of straw and the great creature slowly licking itself all over ; and then its smell, sweet, and warm, and awful, swallowed him up, and he lay quite still on the floor of the cage, listening to its tail going thump, thump, thump on the floor beside him. Terror could go no further, and at last he opened his eyes and slowly understood that it was his own heart which was beating and no beast's tail, and all

about him there were clean sheets and flowers and a smell of iodoform. But his fear lasted for half that day.

In a fortnight Mr. Cromartie was pronounced out of danger, but he continued in so weak a state for some time afterwards that he was not allowed to receive any visitors, so that although Josephine called every day it was only to hear the latest news of how he had passed the night, and to leave flowers for the sickroom.

In the following weeks Mr. Cromartie made a rapid recovery ; that is to say, though by no means restored to his ordinary health, he was able first to get up for an hour in the middle of the day, and then to go for a short walk round the Gardens.

The doctors attending upon him suggested at this time that an entire change of scene would be beneficial, and the curator, far from putting any obstacles in the way of this, frequently urged the patient to go for a month's holiday to Cornwall. But in this he was met by a steady and obstinate refusal, or rather by complete passivity and non-resistance. Mr. Cromartie refused to take a holiday. He declined to go away anywhere by himself, though he added that he was completely at the curator's disposal and prepared to go to any place where he was sent in charge of a keeper. After some days, during which the curator proposed first one scheme and then another, the plan of Mr. Cromartie's being sent away was abandoned. In the first place it was difficult to spare a keeper, or for that matter to

find a suitable man among the staff to go with Mr. Cromartie, and it was difficult to find a suitable place where they should be sent.

But the chief reason why these schemes were given up was because of the apathetic and even hostile attitude which the invalid adopted to them, and because it occurred to the curator that this hostility was perhaps not without a reason.

And indeed there is no doubt that Mr. Cromartie felt that if he once took such a holiday as had been suggested he would find it very much harder to go back into captivity at the end of it, and he opposed it because he was resolved not to escape from what he conceived were his obligations.

It was therefore decided that Mr. Cromartie should go straight back to his cage, though it was impressed upon him that he would not be expected to be on view to the public any longer than he wished, and that he must lie down to rest in his inner room for two or three hours every day.

In this way, and by taking him for motor-car drives for a couple of hours or so after dark, it was hoped that he would be able to regain his accustomed health and shake off that state of apathy which seemed his most alarming symptom to the medical men who attended him.

But before Cromartie went back to his old quarters he was to hear a piece of news from the curator which concerned him very closely, though he did not at first realise the full significance of it.

The curator was so confused in imparting this

information, and so apologetic, and occupied so much time with a preamble explaining how much the Zoological Society felt themselves indebted to him, that Mr. Cromartie had some difficulty in following what he said, but at last he got at the gist of it, and the long and the short of the matter was : The experiment of exhibiting a man had been a much greater success than any of the Committee had dared to hope ; such a success, indeed, that it had decided to follow it up by having a second man, a negro. It had actually engaged him two or three days since, and had installed him only that day. The intention of the Committee was eventually to establish a " Man-house " which should contain specimens of all the different races of mankind, with a Bushman, South Sea Islanders, etc., in native costume, but such a collection could of course only be formed gradually and as occasion offered.

The embarrassment of the poor curator as he made these revelations was so extreme that Cromartie could only think of how best to set him once more at his ease, and though he had a very distinct moment of annoyance when he heard of the negro, yet he suppressed it completely. When the curator had been persuaded that Cromartie bore him no grudge for these innovations, nay more, that he was perfectly indifferent to them, his joy and relief were as overwhelming as his distress and embarrassment had been before.

First he blew out a great breath, and mopped his forehead with a big silk handkerchief ; then,

his honest face quite transformed with happiness, he seized Cromartie by the hand, and then by the lapel, and laughed again and again while he explained that he had opposed the project with all his might because he was sure Cromartie would not like it, and after he had been overruled he had not known how to break the news to him. He vowed he had not slept for two nights thinking about it, but now when he learnt that Cromartie actually approved of the plan, he felt a new man. " I am the biggest fool in the world," said he ; " my imagination runs away with me. I am always thinking of how other people are going to be upset, and then it turns out that they don't give a row of pins about the whole affair and I am the only person who feels upset at all . . . all on account of somebody else. . . . Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! It has been just like that over and over again with my wife. It is always happening to me. Well now I'll go full blast ahead with the new ' Man-house,' because, you know, it's a damned good notion. I felt that the whole time, but I couldn't get it out of my head that it was unfair to you."

But Mr. Cromartie did not share his enthusiasm ; he merely repeated to himself, as he had done so often before, that he intended observing his side of the contract so long as the Zoo kept its own, and that there was nothing in all this which infringed or invalidated the contract in any way. But when Mr. Cromartie went into his cage he saw a black man in the cage next door—he was brushing a black

bowler hat—it came as a great shock to Mr. Cromartie to realise that this man was the neighbour about whom the curator had spoken. This negro was almost coal black, a jovial fellow, dressed in a striped pink and green shirt, a mustard-coloured suit, and patent leather boots. When he saw Mr. Cromartie he at once wheeled round, and saying " The interesting invalid has arrived," walked up to the partition separating him from Cromartie and said to him : " Allow me to welcome you back to what is now the Man-house. If I may introduce myself, Joe Tennison : I am delighted to meet you, Mr. Cromartie, it is a real pleasure to have a man next door." Cromartie bowed stiffly and said " Good afternoon " very awkwardly, but the negro was not abashed, and leaned against the wire partition between them so that it bulged.

" They are going to clear all that poor trash away now," he said, pointing at the Chimpanzee beyond Cromartie. " They isn't to be kept with us any more, nasty jealous brutes ; bite your fingers off if they catch you."

Cromartie turned and looked at the Chimpanzee ; it had always seemed to him rather a pathetic beast, but how much more so now while his new neighbour Tennison was speaking of it ! And not for the first time he felt a friendly sympathy for the ugly little ape. Indeed he would far rather have seen the savage old Orang back in her place than have this insufferably verbose fellow patronising the animals near him.

For the moment Cromartie was quite at a loss, and had no idea what to reply to the stream of Mr. Tennison's remarks. He had said nothing at all when a minute or two later he was relieved by the arrival of Collins with his Caracal, which had been sent back to his old cage in the cat-house after Mr. Cromartie's injuries.

The pleasure of the two friends at once more being together was unbounded, and was shown by each of them very strongly after his own fashion. For at first the Caracal trotted up to Cromartie debonairly enough, as if he were just come to give him a sniff, then he began purring loudly and rubbed himself a score of times against Cromartie's legs, winding himself about them, and finally he sprang right up into his friend's arms, licked his face and his hair, and curled up for a moment or two as if he would sleep there ; but no, this was not for long, for he sprang down again. Then he began trotting round the cage, sniffed in the corners, leapt on the table and made certain that all was well.

When Joe Tennison called to him, the Caracal passed by without giving him a glance, and it was just the same with his friend too, for when Cromartie heard the negro begin talking to him he just nodded his head and went into his inner room. But once there Mr. Cromartie reflected that this negro was to be his companion and neighbour for some years, and it would never do to run away from him every time he spoke. Somehow he must make Tennison respect his privacy without making

an enemy of him, and at that moment Mr. Cromartie saw no way of doing this. However, he took down a book of Waley's poems translated from the Chinese, and went back into his cage with it in his hand, and then sat down and began reading.

He lives in thick forests, deep among the hills,
Or houses in the clefts of sharp, precipitous rocks ;
Alert and agile is his nature, nimble are his wits ;
Swift are his contortions,
Apt to every need,
Whether he climbs tall tree-stems of a hundred feet,
Or sways on the shuddering shoulder of a long bough.
Before him, the dark gullies of unfathomable streams;
Behind, the silent hollows of the lonely hills.
Twigs and tendrils are his rocking-chairs,
On rungs of rotting wood he trips
Up perilous places ; sometimes, leap after leap,
Like lightning flits through the woods.
Sometimes he saunters with a sad, forsaken air ;
Then suddenly peeps round
Beaming with satisfaction. Up he springs,
Leaps and prances, whoops and scampers on his way.
Up cliffs he scrambles, up pointed rocks,
Dances on shale that shifts or twigs that snap,
Suddenly swerves and lightly passes. . . .
Oh, what tongue could unravel
The tale of all his tricks ?
Alas, one trait
With the human tribe he shares ; their sweets his sweet,

Their bitter is his bitter. Off sugar from the vat
Of brewers' dregs he loves to sup.
So men put wine where he will pass.
How he races to the bowl !
How nimbly licks and swills !
Now he staggers, feels dazed and foolish,
Darkness falls upon his eyes. . . .
He sleeps and knows no more.
Up steal the trappers, catch him by the mane,
Then to a string or ribbon tie him, lead him home ;
Tether him in the stable or lock him in the yard ;
Where faces all day long
Gaze, gape, gasp at him and will not go away.

Joe Tennison came up three or four times while he was reading and began a conversation, but Cromartie ignored his remarks and did not even lift his head, but just read quietly on.

Fortunately there were a great many of the public come to see their old favourite Mr. Cromartie now he was back, and to have a look at the new black man also, about whom there was nearly as much discussion as there ever had been about Cromartie himself.

The presence of the public was lucky for two reasons ; firstly, it served to distract Joe Tennison by giving him that which he most wanted in life—an audience; and secondly, Mr. Cromartie was able, by totally ignoring spectators, to show him that that was his ordinary method of conducting himself. There was therefore no reason why the

negro should feel himself insulted by being treated as if he did not exist. And here I should explain that Mr. Cromartie had no objection to his neighbour as a negro, and no particular prejudice against persons of that colour. Mr. Tennison was indeed the first negro to whom he had spoken. At the same time the fellow aroused a strong feeling of dislike, and this aversion was one which steadily increased as time went on.

The next day Mr. Cromartie found Josephine Lackett waiting for him when he first went into his cage after breakfast. She was standing a little distance off looking out of the door of the Ape-house (to give it its old name), and Cromartie called out to her before he reflected on what he was doing: "Josephine! Josephine! What are you doing there?"

She turned round and came towards him, and the sight of her so much affected Mr. Cromartie that for some time he did not trust himself to speak again, and when he did so it was more tenderly than he had done since his captivity. But Josephine on her part could not for some time get used to the presence of Mr. Tennison, who sat lolling in a deck chair within a few feet of them and kept putting his gold-rimmed eyeglass in his eye to stare at her, and then letting it fall out, as if he had not quite learnt the trick of it, which was indeed the case, as he had only bought it a week before.

For some little time then Josephine found herself with nothing to say except to congratulate John on

his recovery, and to tell him how glad she was that he was well again. Then she thanked him for calling to her and letting her speak to him.

" Don't behave like a goose, Josephine," said John Cromartie. Then guessing why she was constrained, he said : " My dear Josephine, do ignore him as I do."

But Josephine did not speak, and just then in strolled the Caracal, having just completed his morning toilet.

" I paid your cat several visits while you were ill," said Josephine. " He seemed very unhappy and would not take much notice of me. I think he is rather shy of women, and is not used to them."

Mr. Cromartie nodded. He was glad Josephine had gone to see the Caracal, but he knew that she had wasted her time ; he did not care for the people who came and gazed into his cage from the outside. Suddenly he heard Josephine say : " John, I must see you in private. I must talk to you, because I cannot go on like this. You cannot go on shirking things any longer."

" What do you mean ? "

" I mean that you must recognise that we are bound up with each other. I don't mind *what* you decide to do, but you must do something. I cannot go on living like this any longer. Please arrange somehow for us to see each other and talk it over."

It was Cromartie now who was embarrassed and shy ; Cromartie who could not talk simply about what he felt, at least not for a considerable time.

At last, however, he got out a few disconnected remarks, saying he was very sorry but he could do nothing then, and that he was not a free agent. But in the end he got more confidence and looked Josephine straight in the eyes and said : " My dear, it's quite inevitable that both of us should be unhappy. I love you, if you want me to put it in that way. I cannot ever forget you, and now you seem to be feeling the same for me, and you too must expect to be very unhappy. I only hope your feeling for me will wear off. I daresay it will in time, and I hope my feeling for you will also. Until then we must try and be resigned."

" I am not resigned," said Josephine. " I'm going to get savage about it, or go mad or something."

" It's the greatest mistake for us to stir up each other's feelings," said Cromartie rather roughly. " That's the worst thing we can either of us do, the most unkind thing. No, the only thing for you to do is to forget me, the only hope for me is to forget you."

" That's impossible ; it's worse when we don't see each other," said Josephine.

Just then they realised that several people had come into the Ape-house and were hesitating to interrupt their conversation.

" It's a bad business," said Cromartie, " a damned bad business," and at these words Josephine went away. He turned away and sat down, but a moment later he heard a loud " Excuse me, Sah.

Excuse an intrusion, but I believe, Sah, that your young lady friend's christian name is Josephine. That is a remarkable coincidence! for my own name, you know, is Joseph. Joseph and Josephine."

If, on hearing this remark, Mr. Cromartie gave Tennison any encouragement to continue, it was quite accidental. At the moment he was feeling faint, and only by an effort of will continued standing where he was without clutching hold of the bars.

" Are you interested in the girls? " asked the negro. " They come and watch me all the morning, and they do stare so . . . he, he, he."

" No, I'm not interested," said Mr. Cromartie. Nobody could have mistaken the desperate sincerity in his voice.

" I'm glad to hear that," said Tennison, at once restored to his former heartiness and buoyancy of manner.

" That is how I feel myself, just how I feel. I have no interest in women at all. Only my poor old mammy, my old black mammy, she was of the very best, the very best she was. A mother is the best friend you have through life—the best friend you can make. My mother was ignorant, she could not read, neither could she write, but she knew almost all of the whole Bible by heart, and I first learnt of Salvation from my mother's lips. When I was five years old she taught me the Holy Words of Glory, and I repeated them after her text by text. She was the best friend I shall ever have.

" But other women—no, sir. I have no use for

them. They are just a temptation in a man's life, a temptation to make him forget his true manhood. And the worst of it is that the more you shun them the more they do run after you. That's a fact.

" No, I am very much safer and better off here shut up alongside of you, with this wire netting and bars to fence off the women, and I guess you feel the same way as I do. Don't you, Mr. Cromartie ? " Cromartie suddenly looked up and saw the person who had been addressing him.

" Who are you ? " he asked, and then, looking rather wildly, he walked out of his cage into his back room, where he lay down feeling very exhausted.

He was still very weak from his illness, and the close atmosphere of the Ape-house gave him a headache. Every moment he had now to exercise self-control, and it was more and more exhausting for him to do so. Very often he did what he did on this occasion, and this was to lie down to rest in his back room and then burst into tears, quite without any restraint, and though he laughed at himself afterwards, the act of weeping comforted him, although it left him weaker than before and more inclined to weep again.

But the pricks and troubles of the outside world meant very little to Mr. Cromartie just then. He could not help thinking the whole time of Josephine.

For so long he had believed that there were so many insuperable obstacles which would prevent them ever being happy together, that the additional fact of his being shut up in the Zoo was a relief to

him. But now that he felt so weak it was an extra strain, and especially now as he was beginning to wonder if Josephine and he could not be happy together for a little while.

He still knew that they were too proud to endure each other for very long, but could they not have a week or a month or even a year of happiness together ?

Perhaps they might, but anyhow it wasn't possible, and here he was locked up in a cage, with a nigger waiting outside to talk some disgusting trash at him and wear out his patience.

But as a matter of fact, when Cromartie pulled himself together once more and went out into his cage Joe Tennison did not address him—that is, not directly. But he was as tiresome as he had been before, but now it was in a different way.

When Cromartie had settled down and had been reading for a little while, there were no visitors for two or three minutes, and then he heard the negro speaking to himself as he gazed in his direction.

" Poor fellow ! Poor young fellow ! The women do make hay with a man, they do. I've been through it all. . . . I know all about it. . . . Oh, gracious, yes. Love ! Love is the very devil. And that poor young man is certainly in love. Nobody can cheer him up. Nobody can do anything except her that caused the trouble in his heart. There's nothing I can do for him now except just to pretend to notice nothing, the same as I always do." At this point the speaker was distracted by the arrival of a party

of visitors who stopped outside his cage, but thereafter Mr. Cromartie adopted the same method to the negro that he had always adopted to the public. That is to say, he ignored his existence and contrived never to meet his eyes, and never took the least notice of what he said.

The next morning, while Cromartie was playing with his Caracal, with a ball, as he had been accustomed to do before the Orang had taken advantage of him, he heard Josephine's voice calling to him.

He threw the ball to his friend the bounding, tasselled cat, and went straight to her, and without waiting for any greeting she said to him :

" John, I love you, and I must see you alone at once. I must come into your cage and talk to you there."

" No, Josephine, don't—that's not possible," said Cromartie. " I can't go on seeing you like this even, and surely you see that if you were to come into my cage I could not bear it after you had gone away."

" But I don't want to go away," said Josephine.

" If you were ever to come inside my cage you would have to stay for ever," said Cromartie. He had recovered himself now, his moment of weakness was past. " And if you don't decide to do that, I don't think we can go on seeing each other at all. I think I shall die if I see you like this. We can never be happy together."

" Well, we had better be unhappy together than

unhappy apart," said Josephine. She had suddenly begun to cry.

" My darling creature," said Cromartie, " it's all a silly mistake ; but we will arrange things somehow. I'll get the curator to have you in the next cage to me instead of that damned nigger, and we shall see each other all the time."

Josephine shook her head vigorously to get the tears out of her eyes, like a dog that has been swimming.

" No, that won't do," she declared angrily, " that won't do at all. It has got to be the same cage as yours or I won't live in a cage at all. I haven't come here to live in a cage by myself. I'll share yours and be damned to everyone else."

She gave an angry laugh and shook her yellow hair back. Her eyes sparkled with tears, but she looked steadily at Cromartie. " Damn other people," she repeated ; " I care for nobody in the world but you, John, and if we are going to be put in a cage and persecuted, we must just bear it. I hate them all, and I'm going to be happy with you in spite of them. Nobody can make me feel ashamed now. I can't help being myself and I will be myself."

" Darling," said Cromartie, " you would be wretched here. It's awful ; you mustn't think of it. I have a much more sensible plan. I can't ask them to let me go. Anyhow I shan't do that. But I am still so feeble that I can easily make myself really ill again, and then I think they will let me go and we can get married."

" That won't do," said Josephine. " We can't wait any longer, and you would die if you tried that. There was nothing about your not being allowed to marry in the contract when you came here, was there ? " she asked. " You have only got to tell them that you are going to get married to-day, and that your wife is ready to live in your cage."

During this conversation several people had come into the Ape-house, and after looking at Josephine in a highly scandalised manner had gone out again, but now Collins came in. He looked rather puzzled and awkward when he saw Josephine, but she turned to him at once and said :

" Mr. Cromartie and I wish to see the curator ; will you please find him and ask him to come here ? "

" Very good," said Collins ; then catching sight of Joe Tennison gazing at Cromartie and the lady from a distance of three feet, with his yellow eyeballs almost popping out of his sooty face, he sternly ordered him to go into the back room of his cage.

" Oh, I can tell you something, I can tell you what you'ld never believe," cried Joe, but Collins silently pointed his finger at him, and the nigger jumped up and slowly beat a retreat into his own quarters.

Ten minutes later the curator came in.

" Come round to the back where we can talk more conveniently, Miss Lackett," he said. Then he unlocked the door of the inner cage or den and Josephine walked in. They sat down.

" I have asked Miss Lackett to marry me, and have been accepted," said Cromartie rather stiffly. " I was anxious to tell you at once, so as to make arrangements with regard to the ceremony, which of course we wish to be carried out as privately as possible, and at once. After our marriage my wife is prepared to live with me in this cage, unless of course you arrange for us to have other quarters."

The curator suddenly laughed, a loud, good-natured, hearty laugh. To Cromartie it seemed a piece of brutality, to Josephine a menace. They both frowned, and drew slightly together waiting for the worst.

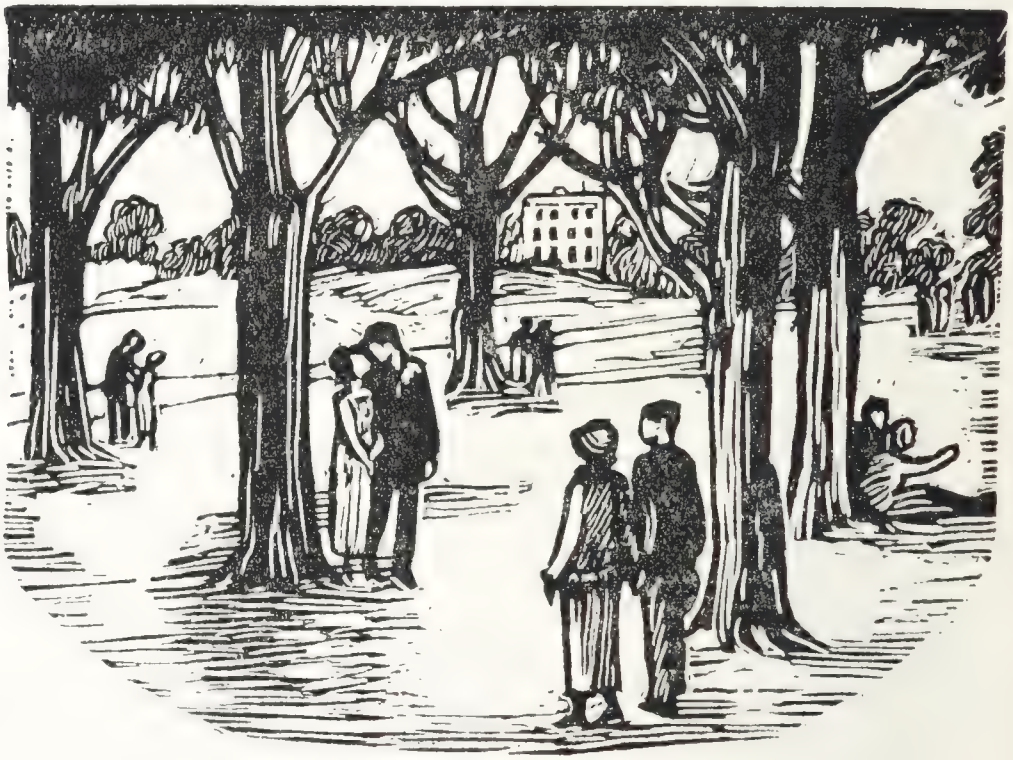
" I ought to explain to you," the curator began, " that the committee has already considered what to do in the event of such a contingency as this occurring.

" It is impossible, for various reasons, for us to keep married couples in the Man-house, and we decided that in the event of your mentioning marriage, Mr. Cromartie, that we should consider our contract with you at an end. In other words you are free to go, and in fact I am now going to turn you out."

As he said these words the curator rose and opened the door. For a moment the happy couple hesitated; they looked at each other and then walked out of the cage together, but Josephine kept hold of her man as they did so. The curator slammed the door and locked it on the forgotten Caracal, and then said :

" Cromartie, I congratulate you very heartily; and my dear Miss Lackett, you have chosen a man for whom all of us here have the very greatest respect and admiration. I hope you will be happy with him."

Hand in hand Josephine and John hurried through the Gardens. They did not stop to look at dogs or foxes, or wolves or tigers, they raced past the lion house and the cattle sheds, and without glancing at the pheasants or a lonely peacock, slipped through the turnstile into Regent's Park. There, still hand in hand, they passed unnoticed into the crowd. Nobody looked at them, nobody recognised them. The crowd was chiefly composed of couples like themselves.



THE END



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A MAN IN THE ZOO

DAVID GARNETT